

Trump's megabill nears OK in Senate

Some in GOP balk at provisions. House sets hearing for Tuesday to reconcile legislation.

BY MICHAEL WILNER

WASHINGTON — President Trump's megabill encompassing his domestic agenda on Monday inched closer to becoming law as Republican senators sifted through familiar procedural hurdles toward a final vote on legislation that would dramatically transform the tax code and Medicaid.

Throughout a day of marathon voting, senators offered amendments to the bill that could ultimately decide whether it secures passage through Congress. If the Senate approves the legislation — as it is expected to do by a slim, simple majority and with bipartisan opposition — then the House will have to vote for a second time on the final text before it goes to the president's desk for his signature.

Anticipating Senate passage, the House Rules Committee has already scheduled a hearing on reconciling the two bills for Tuesday. The White House previously set July 4 as a goal to get the package, called the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act," passed by both chambers.

But several Republicans are still criticizing the bill, including Sens. Rand Paul of Kentucky and Thom Tillis of North Carolina, who announced he will not seek reelection in 2026 over the weekend before ripping into the legislation as a "betrayal" to voters.

Although the legislation has hundreds of provisions, its most sweeping would make tax breaks passed in 2017 during Trump's first term permanent — an expensive proposition — before they are set to expire at the end of this year, while attempting to offset some of those costs with historic cuts to Medicaid and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, social welfare programs that for decades had been seen as a political third rail.

Polling shows that Americans broadly support extending the 2017 tax cuts. Other expensive programs in the bill — including additional funding for border security and defense — also enjoy public support. But polls indicate that the public disapproves of the bill overall by a double-digit margin due to its cuts to core government programs.

"What do I tell 663,000 people in two years or three years, when President Trump breaks his promise by pushing them off of Medicaid because the funding's not there anymore?" Tillis said in a speech from the Senate floor. "The people in the White House advising the president are not telling him that the effect of this bill is to break a promise."

Both Paul and Tillis



GENARO MOLINA Los Angeles Times

NATIVO'S Corissa Hernandez keeps the restaurant's door closed and checks visitors through a window.

Restaurants wrestle with aiding vulnerable workers

Tucked into a Chinatown shopping plaza, the modern Filipino restaurant Lasita is typically bursting with energy. Orbs of yellow light wash over plates of juicy chicken inasal; longtime friends catch up over handpicked wines as music thumps in the background.

That all changed on the evening of Friday, June 6, when more than 10 Immigration and Customs Enforcement vans filled the parking lot across from the restaurant, leaving guests and staff "spooked," said co-owner Chase Valencia.

"We were in a position of just reacting and in a state of shock because we didn't know how to respond accordingly," said Valencia,

A frightened and confused industry scrambles to support its staff, largely made up of immigrants

By Karla Marie Sanford

who manages a predominantly Asian and Latino staff.

Since that evening, the Lasita team has weathered canceled reservations and understaffing as the Greater Los Angeles metropolitan area has been swept by fear. Restaurant owners and managers have had to scramble to provide a framework of security and support for their staff, many of whom are undocumented immigrants.

"The industry is deeply confused," said Corissa Hernandez, the owner of Nativo, a Mexican bar and restaurant in Highland Park. "We're alarmed. We're frustrated about the lack of transparency, especially legal clarity."

[See Restaurants, A11]

California's fire season is off to a furious start

Several blazes broke out over the weekend in dry inland areas. Experts warn of more to come.

By Grace Toohey

Wildfire season in Southern California got off to an ominous start last weekend, with several fires sparking across Riverside and San Bernardino counties' parched landscapes, elevating concerns that conditions are ripe for a fiery year across the Golden State.

Experts have been warning that the Southland's below-average rainy season is likely to set the stage for a particularly bad stretch of fires this summer and fall — and the recent spate of blazes appears to be a sign of what's to come.

"We are on track for a pretty devastating year overall," said Matt Rahn, the director of the Wildfire Conservancy, a nonprofit that works to improve firefighting and community resilience. "If we get hotter and drier throughout the state, then that risk increases significantly. We're hoping that that doesn't happen, but all predictions are pointing to a much hotter, drier summer and fall."

This week, temperatures in the Southland are expected to begin to cool slightly after several days with highs in the 90s and triple digits across the interior, but heat will remain in-



GINA FERAZZI Los Angeles Times

THE LAKE FIRE burns in San Bernardino County.

Central Valley, highs are expected to remain near or in the triple digits, while a chance for thunderstorms in parts of Northern California could compound fire concerns.

Though temperatures on Monday and last weekend surged across much of inland Southern California, there was not an increased wind threat or particularly low humidity — elements that create heightened fire weather.

Still, vegetation in the area was already so parched that fires were able to take off in several spots in the Inland Empire and San Bernardino mountains, forcing large-scale evacuations and cementing concerns that this wildfire season could be particularly bad.

"Just because things have been so dry and we haven't had that meaningful rainfall that we need, that's why we're starting to see fires about to break out," said Sam Zuber, a National Weather Service meteorologist in San Diego. "Things are just really dry out there."

On Monday, firefighters in Riverside County responded to the fourth new, large fire in just two days, trying to contain the flames

L.A. is an illegal haven, U.S. says

Federal lawsuit targets sanctuary law, saying it hinders immigration enforcement efforts.

By Brittney Mejia, David Zahniser and Noah Goldberg

The U.S. Department of Justice sued the city of Los Angeles, Mayor Karen Bass and City Council members Monday, calling L.A.'s sanctuary city law "illegal" and asking that it be blocked from being enforced.

The lawsuit, filed by the Trump administration in the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California, said that the country is "facing a crisis of illegal immigration" and that its efforts to address it "are hindered by Sanctuary Cities such as the City of Los Angeles, which refuse to cooperate or share information, even when requested, with federal immigration authorities."

Federal prosecutors said in their filing that Donald Trump campaigned and won the 2024 presidential election on a platform of deporting "millions of illegal immigrants." By enacting a sanctuary city ordinance, the City Council sought to "thwart the will of the American people regarding deportations," the lawsuit states.

Last month, immigration agents descended on Southern California, arresting more than 1,600 immigrants and prompting furious protests in downtown Los Angeles, Paramount and other communities. According to the lawsuit, L.A.'s refusal to cooperate with federal immigration authorities since June 6 has resulted in "lawlessness, rioting, looting, and vandalism."

"The situation became so dire that the Federal Government deployed the California National Guard and United States Marines to quell the chaos," the lawsuit states. "A direct confrontation with federal immigration authorities was the inevitable outcome of the Sanctuary City law."

Atty. Gen. Pam Bondi called the city's sanctuary policies "the driving cause of the violence, chaos, and attacks on law enforcement that Americans recently witnessed in Los Angeles."

"Jurisdictions like Los Angeles that flout federal law by prioritizing illegal aliens over American citizens are undermining law enforcement at every level — it ends under President Trump," Bondi said in a statement Monday.

Bass did not immediately respond to a request for comment. In recent weeks, she has pushed back against the Trump administration's portrayal of L.A. as a city en-

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JASON ARMOND Los Angeles Times

MORE FOURTH of July shows have used drones instead of fireworks. Above, an event in Pacoima on Sunday.

Sparks-free Rose Bowl

After decades,
large fireworks
show is out on
Fourth of July.
Drones are in



GINA FERAZZI Los Angeles Times

SEVERAL communities have called off or postponed Fourth of July celebrations.

July 4 events scrapped over fears of ICE raids

L.A.-area communities
cancel parade, movie
nights, celebrations,
'Freedom Walk.'

BY KAREN GARCIA

Marking the end of a longtime tradition, the Fourth of July celebration at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena will not feature a fireworks show this year. Instead, there will be a drone show.

The move comes as some venues have switched from fireworks to drone shows — in which a fleet of drones performs a choreographed light show — to celebrate the Fourth of July.

But drone shows have fallen flat for some. Notably Redondo Beach and Laguna Beach switched back to fireworks after trying out drone shows, and some promoters of fireworks shows have voiced criticism over efforts to transition to drone shows.

For Pasadena, it's a big change — the Rose Bowl Independence Day fireworks show was touted as one of the largest in the region, and was viewable not only in the stadium but also the surrounding area. A soccer match preceded the fireworks show on the last two July 4 holidays.

Before that, the Rose Bowl fireworks were the highlight of the decades-old

[See Drones, B4]

Several communities in Los Angeles County have called off or postponed their Independence Day and July events, citing resident safety amid ongoing immigration enforcement raids.

The El Sereno Bicentennial Committee was one of the first organizations to announce the cancellation of its 66th Independence Day Parade in a June 20 statement on Facebook.

"We stand with our community. The safety of our participants, spectators and volunteers is always at the forefront," the post read.

The celebration is typically composed of numerous local organizations, schools and entertainment groups along with more than 1,200

people marching in the parade, according to the committee.

However, many groups withdrew their entries from this year's parade, which ultimately led to the committee's decision, according to the post.

Raids throughout Los Angeles County in Home Depot parking lots, popular food vendor locations and car washes have stoked fear in residents.

"You can see the impact

[See Cancellation, B4]

Justices side against L.A. landlords on eviction ban

Lawsuit claims city in effect took plaintiffs' property during pandemic emergency.

BY DAVID G. SAVAGE

WASHINGTON — With two conservatives in dissent, the Supreme Court on Monday turned down a property rights claim from Los Angeles landlords who say they lost millions from unpaid rent during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Without comment, the justices said they would not hear an appeal from a coalition of apartment owners who said they rent "over 4,800 units" in "luxury apartment communities" to "predominantly high-income tenants."

They sued the city seeking \$20 million in damages from tenants who did not pay their rent during the pandemic emergency.

They contended that the city's strict limits on evictions during that time had the effect of taking their private property in violation of the Constitution.

In the past, the court has repeatedly turned down claims that rent control laws are unconstitutional, even though they limit how much landlords can collect in rent.

But the L.A. landlords said their claim was different because the city had in effect taken use of their property, at least for a time. They cited the 5th Amendment's clause that says "private property [shall not] be taken for public use without just compensation."

"In March 2020, the city of Los Angeles adopted one of the most onerous eviction moratoria in the country, stripping property owners ... of their right to exclude non-paying tenants," they told the court in GHP Management Corp. vs. City of Los Angeles. "The city pressed private property into public service, foisting the cost of its coronavirus response onto housing providers."

"By August 2021, when [they] sued the City seeking just compensation for that physical taking, back rents owed by their unremovable tenants had ballooned to over \$20 million," they wrote.

A federal judge in Los Angeles and the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in a 3-0 decision dismissed the landlords' suit. Those judges cited the decades of precedent that allowed the regulation of property.

The court had considered the appeal since February, but only Justices Clarence Thomas and Neil M. Gorsuch voted to hear the case.

"I would grant review of the question whether a policy barring landlords from evicting tenants for the non-payment of rent effects a physical taking under the Taking Clause," Thomas said. "This case meets all of our usual criteria. ... The Court nevertheless denies certiorari, leaving in place confusion on a significant issue, and leaving petitioners without a chance to obtain the relief to which they are likely entitled."

The Los Angeles landlords asked the court to decide "whether an eviction

[See Landlords, B4]

2 men with 2 buckets carry out a koi heist

A suspect is held after 85 fish went missing from a restaurant in Yucaipa, deputies say.

BY CHRISTOPHER BUCHANAN

Under the cover of early-morning darkness, two men methodically whisked away thousands of dollars from a Yucaipa restaurant — in the form of fish — authorities said.

Eighty-five koi fish were

the spoils of a burglary operation involving back-and-forth bucket hauls.

Security video obtained by The Times shows two individuals holding buckets and repeatedly entering and exiting the outdoor property of Oak House Restaurant. The restaurant has a small ranch where customers can observe a variety of exotic animals, such as Amazon cockatoos, fainting goats and the koi fish, said Silvia Duarte, who owns the business with her husband.

"How can you trust people now?" Duarte said. "We have antiques at the restaurant, we have classic cars. This is a unique place you don't see everywhere."

David Smith, 42, was arrested Wednesday on suspi-

Database reveals Latinos' climate health risks

U.S. sues L.A. over its sanctuary city law

[Sanctuary, from A1] developed in violence, saying that immigration agents are the ones sowing chaos, terrorizing families and harming the city's economy.

"To characterize what is going on in our city as a city of mayhem is just an outright lie," Bass said last month. "I'm not going to call it an untruth. I'm not going to sugarcoat it. I'm going to call it for what it is, which is a lie."

Councilmember Hugo Soto-Martinez represents much of Hollywood, where immigration agents recently raided a Home Depot on Sunset Boulevard. Asked about the lawsuit, he said the president is "tearing families apart" as he seeks to "force every city and town to help him carry out his white nationalist agenda."

"We refuse to stand by and let Donald Trump deport innocent families. We're going to do everything within our power to keep families together," Soto-Martinez said in a statement.

L.A.'s sanctuary city law was proposed in early 2023, long before Trump's election, but it was finalized after his victory in November.

Under the ordinance, city employees and city property may not be used to "investigate, cite, arrest, hold, transfer or detain any person" for the purpose of immigration enforcement. An exception is made for law enforcement investigating serious offenses.

The ordinance bars city employees from seeking out information about an individual's citizenship or immigration status unless it is needed to provide a city service. They also must treat data or information that can be used to trace a person's citizenship or immigration status as confidential.

In the lawsuit, federal prosecutors allege that the city's ordinance violates the Supremacy Clause of the U.S. Constitution, by ob-



L.A. Mayor Karen Bass joins faith leaders for a prayer vigil in Grand Park last month to support immigrants.

structing the federal government's ability to enforce laws enacted by Congress. They claim the city is treating federal immigration authorities differently from other law enforcement agencies by restricting entry to property, denying access to individual detainees and prohibiting city contractors from providing them information.

"The Supremacy Clause prohibits the City of Los Angeles and its officials from singling out the Federal Government for adverse treatment — as the challenged law and policies do — thereby discriminating against the Federal Government," the lawsuit says.

Trump's Department of Justice contends that L.A.'s sanctuary city ordinance

goes much further than similar laws in other jurisdictions, by "seeking to undermine the Federal Government's immigration enforcement efforts."

The lawsuit also cites a June 10 meeting in which council members grilled Police Chief Jim McDonnell about his department's handling of the immigration raids. During that session, Councilmember Imelda Padilla, who represents a heavily Latino district in the San Fernando Valley, asked McDonnell whether the Los Angeles Police Department would consider warning council members about impending raids.

"Chief McDonnell correctly identified that request for what it was: 'ob-

struction of justice,'" the lawsuit states.

The federal filing comes as the city's elected officials are weighing their own lawsuit against the Trump administration, one aimed at barring immigration agents from violating the constitutional rights of their constituents.

The City Council is scheduled to meet Tuesday to ask City Atty. Hydee Feldstein Soto to prioritize "immediate legal action" to protect L.A. residents from being racially profiled or unlawfully searched or detained.

Bass has been outspoken about the harm she says the immigration raids have been inflicting on her city, saying they have torn families apart

and created a climate of fear at parks, churches, shopping areas and other locations. The city was peaceful, she said, until federal agents began showing up at Home Depots, parking lots and elsewhere.

"I want to tell him to stop the raids," she said last month, referring to Trump. "I want to tell him that this is a city of immigrants. I want to tell him that if you want to devastate the economy of the city of Los Angeles, then attack the immigrant population."

Chris Newman, legal director for the National Day Laborer Organizing Network, said he views the federal lawsuit as largely symbolic — and believes its actual purpose is to "blackmail"

the city into complying with the Trump administration's immigration agenda.

"On the law it's clearly wrong. The complaint seems to be unaware of the existence of the 10th Amendment to the United States Constitution," Newman said, referring to the amendment that leaves powers to states and localities that are not explicitly given to the federal government.

"While it's true the U.S. government retains authority over immigration law, that authority does not permit them to unconstitutionally invade local governments or strip them of their local authority," he said.

Newman also said he found it hypocritical of the federal government to claim Immigration and Customs Enforcement is facing discrimination, "given the demonstrable racism and discrimination underlying the Trump administration's own immigration activities."

Erwin Chemerinsky, dean of the UC Berkeley School of Law, said he also thinks the lawsuit is at odds with the 10th Amendment — and that the federal government cannot force a city to use its resources for immigration enforcement.

Although cities are barred from obstructing federal immigration officials, they are not required to cooperate with them, he said in an email.

"For example, a city can decide it won't turn people over to ICE out of fear that victims of crime won't come forward," Chemerinsky said. "A city can decide it won't have its schools turn over children for fear they won't attend. Public hospitals can decide not to turn over people for fear that those who are ill, including with communicable diseases, won't come forward."

Times staff writer Dakota Smith contributed to this report.

Dry conditions are in place for a devastating fire season

[Fires, from A1] that broke out just before noon near Perris. The Juniper fire was initially reported at 30 acres, but quickly grew to 175 acres, "burning at a critical rate of speed," according to updates from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

Officials ordered several areas to evacuate and closed a two-mile stretch of Santa Rosa Mine Road between Juniper and Post roads.

About 25 miles northeast, firefighters continued battling the Wolf fire near Banning, where hundreds had been ordered to leave their homes for safety and many more were under evacuation warnings.

The 1,400-acre blaze was reportedly 10% contained Monday morning, but by the afternoon, that number had dropped back down to zero, according to an update from Cal Fire.

At least two additional areas were ordered to evacuate overnight and more were placed under evacuation warnings Monday morning, on top of some 750 people who had already been put under evacuation warnings.



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By Ron G

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A teen hero with nerves of steel

['Ironheart,' from E1]

skirt [but someone with] real dimension, real depth and real challenges and concerns," she added.

Out now on Disney+, "Ironheart" follows Riri (portrayed by Dominique Thorne), a 19-year-old MIT student introduced in the 2022 film "Black Panther: Wakanda Forever," as she finds herself back in her hometown of Chicago.

After getting whisked away to Wakanda to help save the day, Riri is more driven than ever to complete her own version of a high-tech Iron Man-like suit to cement her legacy. But unlike Tony or the Wakandans, Riri doesn't have unlimited resources to do so, which leads her to make some questionable decisions.

"She's incredibly reverent of Tony Stark [being] ahead of her, but her path is not the same as his," says Hodge, who can relate to Riri having "no blueprint" for her journey. "How to empower your idea without resource, without changing your morals, is a really difficult road, and that's basically where we put Riri for the life of the series."

Compared to most of her Marvel Cinematic Universe counterparts, Riri is a fairly new character. Created by Brian Michael Bendis and Mike Deodato, the 15-year-old tech whiz made her comic book debut in a 2016 issue of "Invincible Iron Man." Besides Tony Stark, Riri has crossed paths with characters such as Pepper Potts (Rescue), Kamala Khan (Ms. Marvel) and Miles Morales (Spider-Man).

A self-described "Marvel head," Hodge explains that Riri initially hit her radar because of her friendship with fellow poet and scholar Eve Ewing, who was the writer on the first "Ironheart" comic book series.

"My first encounter with Riri was watching Eve literally leave a poetry [event] and say, 'I have to go to my house ... I'm working on some cool things,'" Hodge says. "In a true fan kind of way, I'm interested in characters that look like me, and low-key, Riri really looks like me, [so] I very much leaned in."

As she became more familiar with the character, what also struck Hodge, as someone on the autism spectrum, is how Riri can be read as neurodiverse. "One of the most important things about Riri [is] how she feels like me and my mom and other women who lean into their brains,"

she says.

Fans of Ironheart from the comics will recognize that elements of Riri's characterization and backstory draw upon what has been established in the books, but Hodge notes that they were not beholden to those storylines in terms of whom the teen could encounter on the show, regardless of the timeline or dimension. Hodge's learning curve, however, did include discovering the different levels and types of magic that exist in the broader Marvel universe, as well as potential storylines getting derailed because it fell under another character's purview.

Though she is still a teen genius, the Riri in the series is slightly older than in the comics. Hodge also describes this Riri as more of an antihero because she has the potential to land on either side of the hero/villain line based on the choices she makes.

Hodge, along with "Ironheart" directors Sam Bailey and Angela Barnes, sing Thorne's praises, for her portrayal of Riri and as a collaborator. Hodge calls the Cornell-educated actor "a genius" and says she strove to pull Riri's dialogue up to the level of Thorne's intellect, rather than the other way around. Bailey, who directed the first three episodes of the series, says Thorne "brought such a soulfulness to the character." And Barnes, who directed Episodes 4 through 6, commends her capacity to be present for her fellow actors.

"It was exciting to just create the environment to let her do her thing and feel safe within doing that," Bailey says.

"Ironheart" marks the first time the MCU has spotlighted Chicago, and for the show's creative team, it was important to get the city right. Hodge, who grew up in Oakland, admits that while she may not have direct knowledge as an outsider, she can relate to how Riri regards her home and wanted to treat the city with respect.

"Chicago's my favorite cast member," Hodge says. "I think Riri feels about Chicago how I feel about Oakland. It's a hometown, but it's [also] a legacy we're carrying. Us being from there means something if we do something right with our lives."

That type of hometown pride was shared by many in the "Ironheart" cast and crew. Hodge says the aim



Photographs by JALEN MARLOWE Marvel



DOMINIQUE THORNE stars as Riri Williams, top. Zoe Terakes, left, Sonia Denis, Shakira Barrera, Thorne, Shea Couleé, Anthony Ramos and Manny Montana.

was to tap as many Chicago artists and musicians — from local bucket drummers to cast members like Shea Couleé — to capture the true texture of the city. Among those with strong personal ties to the city is Bailey, who is from Chicago, and Hodge credits the director with helping to bring their vision to life.

"I feel like Chicago has this beautiful chip on its shoulder," Bailey says. "We don't trust a lot of people. We're very protective of the city and its inhabitants. ... There was a bit of rebelliousness I wanted to capture ... and the different types of people that populate that city, which I don't feel like we get to see a lot on-screen."

As the director of the first half of the series, Bailey's goal was to set up the backstory and establish the vibrancy of everyone intro-

duced in the early episodes to prepare for the adventure to come.

"It was really important to really make these characters feel like people and feel like people you wanted to be around and feel like people you want to root for," says Bailey.

Among these characters in Riri's orbit are those she shares a history with, like her mother, Ronnie (Anji White), her close friend Xavier (Matthew Elam) and even the neighborhood's youngest businessman, Landon (Harper Anthony). But Riri soon finds herself in the company of a new crew led by Parker Robbins (Anthony Ramos), who some might compare to Robin Hood or a freedom fighter, at least initially.

Mindful of spoilers, Barnes only teases that the second half of the series involves Riri having to face

some of the consequences of choices she made in earlier episodes.

"[Riri] made this decision to maybe hang out with people that aren't necessarily the most savory of people," says Barnes. "They also have their own reasons for doing what they're doing, but ... she gets in a little deeper than she imagined."

A self-proclaimed MCU fan, Barnes emphasizes how the show was intentional in everything from its set pieces to decoration, including how the design for the heads-up display of Riri's suit was inspired by infographics from the works of W.E.B. Du Bois.

But she also recalls the fun they had during production, like flipping a truck and building a White Castle in a parking lot.

For Hodge, "Ironheart" marks one of her highest-profile projects to date. The

poet and playwright turned to screenwriting after realizing she wanted to expand beyond working in first person and enrolled in USC's graduate film school in 2010. There, she'd meet fellow student filmmakers like "Black Panther's" Ryan Coogler, who is an executive producer on "Ironheart," and "Creed II's" Steven Caple Jr. ("I would just follow Ryan around campus [saying], 'Hire me,'" she says. He eventually did.)

Among the things Hodge was excited about while working on the series was getting to explore larger themes around access, autonomy and safety through specific situations that consider how a young girl from Chicago's South Side might be perceived differently than Tony Stark for owning a weapons-grade tech suit because of what they look like. She was also eager to populate the show with people who reflect the diversity of the real world.

Broadly speaking, "you're gonna see yourself if you turn on the screen on this show," says Hodge, who is glad the MCU has moved to "feel like a universe that's inhabited by the people who read publishing and go to the movies."

"I'm excited for the little, quirky Black girl watching the show who sees herself in it [and] for the queer kid who finds it for their Pride Month activities and wants to watch it," she says. "I'm really excited for that Black boy who wants to play with a Riri Williams action figure and finds it in the store and gets to fly it around his own house. I'm excited and I'm nervous [and] thrilled, and I feel like that's exactly how Riri feels when she's flying over the Chicago skyline."

10 reads for a day at beach

[July reads, from E1]
Robin Hood of Roxbury Drive.

Typewriter Beach
A Novel

Meg Waite Clayton
Harper: 320 pages, \$30
(July 1)

I like the ca age of a well-



serious tomes, yes, but there were Agatha Christie novels, Orwell's "1984" and art books too.

The Hiroshima Men

The Quest to Build the Atomic Bomb, and the Fateful Decision to Use It

Iain MacGregor
Scribner: 384 pages, \$32
(July 8)

Crucially, MacGregor's painstakingly researched history of the atomic bombs dropped on Japan at the end of World War II includes Japanese perspectives. The historian ("Checkpoint Charlie") treats the atomic

Strata

Stories From Deep Time

Laura Poppick
W. W. Norton & Co.: 288 pages, \$30
(July 15)

Each stratum, or layer, of our planet tells a story. Science writer Poppick explains what those millions of strata can tell us about four instances that changed life dramatically, from oxygen entering the atmosphere all the way to the dinosaur era. Ultimately, she argues that these strata show us that when stressed, the earth reacts by changing and



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"For Over Ninety Years The Voice of Our Community Speaking for Itself"

THURSDAY, JUNE 19, 2025

City of Los Angeles Officials and Non-Profit Leaders Hold Press Conference Addressing Deportation-Related Events

Together in Service Coalition and City of L.A. departments come together to show support and offer resources for the communities affected by ICE raids.



BRIAN W. CARTER/L.A. SENTINEL

City of Los Angeles officials and Together in Service gathered at Community Build in Leimert Park to show support for Angelenos during deportation raids.



BRIAN W. CARTER/L.A. SENTINEL

Maddox speaks to media outlet about the purpose of the conference.

BY BRIAN W. CARTER
Contributing Writer

"We are united to support all immigrants in the City of Los Angeles," said Capri Maddox, Esq., executive director for L.A. Civil Rights Department, City of

Los Angeles.

She continued, "Some folks have reported that ICE has actually been in South Los Angeles in doing these raids, but we want to send a strong message that families are in need, families are in crisis."



BRIAN W. CARTER/L.A. SENTINEL

L.A. Civil Rights Department Executive Director Capri Maddox, Esq. and Community Build CEO Robert Sausedo.

"People are afraid, to not only go to work and school, but even to go to the grocery store."

Recently, City of Los Angeles officials and the Together in Service coalition held a press conference at Community Build in Leimert Park to show support for Angelenos in response to deportation-related events. For many Angelenos, especially immigrant communities, the confrontations involving peaceful protestors and deportation enforcement have created a lot of fear and uncertainty.

"I think what's most important is that all Angelenos should be engaged in the preservation of human kind," said Robert Sausedo, CEO of Community Build, "and fight against this tyranny that's trying to break us and our city apart."

[See IMMIGRANT RESOURCE CONFERENCE on B-7]

The Enduring Legacy of Los Angeles's First Juneteenth

BY JUSTIN T. JOSEPH
Contributing Writer

Juneteenth 2025 is observed on Thursday, June 19. This now national holiday commemorates a pivotal moment in American history, rooted in June 19, 1865, when Union General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, to declare the end of slavery. This announcement came more than two years after President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, highlighting the challenges of abolishing slavery across different regions during the Civil War era.

In a similar way, Jonathan Leonard, at the age of 17, migrated from Texas to California. Upon arriving in Los Angeles, he was struck by the lack of awareness surrounding Juneteenth, also known as Emancipation Day. No one in Los Angeles seemed to recognize or celebrate the day of freedom.

Determined to change that, Leonard hosted a family barbecue in his backyard on Juneteenth 1949, a small gathering that would evolve into the annual celebration now enjoyed by thousands in Los Angeles.

[See JUNETEENTH LEGACY on B-7]



COURTESY PHOTO

Jonathan Leonard



COURTESY PHOTO

Board members of Jonathan Leonard's Juneteenth are, from left, Jade McLaughlin, Dr. Hassena Khan Leonard, Jazmine McLaughlin, Ariyana Leonard, Jason McLaughlin, and AyEsha Leonard McLaughlin (not pictured: Jaylon McLaughlin).

Faith and Civic Leaders Pay Tribute to Legacy of

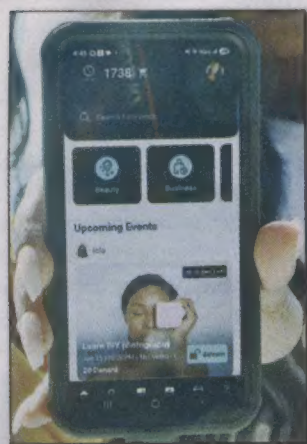
BLM Grassroots Fires Back With Plan to Stand Against ICE Raids

New Digital Platform Empowers Content Creators

BY BILLY MONTGOMERY
Staff Writer

In an increasingly saturated digital landscape, where creators often find themselves at the mercy of platform algorithms and ever-shifting monetization policies, a bold new contender is changing the rules. Enter Soffun — a sleek, creator-focused pay-per-view platform designed to put the power — and the profit — back in the hands of the talent.

Launched after five years of development, Soffun is the brainchild of founders Lola Shonaïke and Aspen Riser, two tech-savvy women who are no strangers to being underestimated. But with a vision as sharp as their code,



BILLY MONTGOMERY/L.A. SENTINEL

Soffun app founders say it's sleek, secure, and built to help creators profit from their passion—on their terms.

they're flipping the script on the traditional creator economy.

"We wanted to build something that prioritized the artist over the algorithm," said Riser, a Los Angeles resident. "We got tired of seeing creators struggle on platforms that didn't support their growth or independence."

A New Home for Premium Content

The creators said Soffun isn't trying to be the next TikTok or YouTube. Instead, it carves out a unique niche—one where premium, pay-per-view live events are the main draw. Streamed events like cooking classes, fitness



After five years of research, testing, and tech-building, Soffun founders Aspen Riser and Lola Shonaïke are just getting started.

sessions, private concerts, or intimate Q&As are monetized, every tip counts, and the content creators set the rules.

At the heart of Soffun's functionality is an in-app currency known as the "Denard," a nod to Riser's father's name. Users can use Denards to tip during streams, send creators emoji reactions, or even submit audio questions during Q&A sessions.

"We wanted to make live interaction feel both engaging and rewarding," said Shonaïke, a New Yorker who handles the back-end engineering. "And with Denards, viewers are investing directly in their favorite creators."

For creators, the revenue model is equally appealing. Soffun takes a modest 15% platform fee—a stark contrast to the 30% or more deducted on other platforms. And for beta users, the deal is even

sweeter: the first ten users get to keep 100% of their earnings for their first three live streams, as long as they go live within three months.

More Than Just a Platform—A Movement

The idea for Soffun was born in 2020 when Shonaïke and Riser, frustrated by restrictive mone-

tization changes on YouTube, decided to do something radical: build a platform from scratch that favored creators over investors.

Their decision to bootstrap—relying on personal savings and grit rather than venture capital—meant a longer road to launch, but it also gave them creative control.

"We've turned down money that didn't align with our values," Riser said. "We didn't want to build something just to appease investors."

Those values include an unwavering commitment to diversity and inclusion. As Black women in tech, both founders are acutely aware of the biases that still permeate the industry.

"We've been underestimated more times than I can count," Shonaïke shared. "Because of our gender, our race, even our age. But we've used that as

fuel. We know what it's like to be on the outside looking in—and we built Soffun to open the door."

An All-in-One Creator Solution

Beyond livestreaming, Soffun offers an all-in-one solution that includes content handling, secure payments, guest management, and built-in marketing tools. It's now available for download on both the Apple App Store and Google Play.

Early feedback has been encouraging. Users have praised the platform's ease of use and engaging interface. A few minor UI bugs were reported during beta testing, but the Soffun team was quick to respond and resolve them.

"The response so far tells us we're on the right path," Riser said. "We're constantly listening and iterating. The goal is to make it easier than ever for creators to do what they love—and get paid well for it."

Building the Soffun Economy

Looking ahead, the founders envision a thriving "Soffun economy" where creators no longer



BILLY MONTGOMERY/L.A. SENTINEL

Aspen Riser and Lola Shonaïke stand firm as the app launches with a clear message — the future belongs to the creator.



BILLY MONTGOMERY/L.A. SENTINEL

Aspen Riser and Lola Shonaïke

need to rely on brand deals or sponsorships to earn a living. Instead, they'll be able to create authentic content, set their own prices, and be fairly compensated—directly by their audience.

"We want to redefine what success looks like for digital entrepreneurs," Shonaïke emphasized. "It's not about follower count. It's about value, ownership, and self-expression."

For Shonaïke and Riser, the most rewarding part of the journey has been watching creators light up at the possibilities. "We've had people tell us, 'This changes everything,'" said Riser.

They also take pride in the friendship that anchors

their partnership. "Running a startup is intense," Riser laughed. "But building it with your best friend? That's priceless."

To recharge, the duo keeps weekends sacred, leans on their tribe of inspiring women, and makes time for music, movies, and meme-worthy pop culture.

With Soffun now live and growing, one thing is clear: this isn't just a platform. It's a movement—a future-forward space where creators can finally be seen, heard, and paid what they're worth.

For more information, visit Soffun's website (<https://soffun.live>) or download the app on your favorite app store.

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LOS ANGELES SENTINEL

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THURSDAY, JUNE 19, 2025

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C-1

Sentinel Holds Two Book Signings, Gives Double the Blessings

BY BRIAN W. CARTER
Contributing Writer

Recently, the Sentinel hosted a dual book signing featuring “Pray with David: A Book of 50 Prayers” by David Ford and “Coaching Yourself on Joy: A Spiritual Perspective” by Dr. Barbara A. Perkins. Both Ford and Perkins share being cancer survivors and having a story to tell, so they naturally felt sharing a book signing would be a blessing for them and attendees.

“We didn’t plan it like that,” said Perkins. “When he sent me his book, I called him and I said the prayers in this book are the



BRIAN W. CARTER/L.A. SENTINEL

Authors Dr. Barbara A. Perkins and David Ford

Perkins continued, “I said, why don’t we do something together and it was the most amazing day and the folks who showed

ing and so spirit-filled with blessings to see so many people come out for us to talk about our testimony, our journey and our experience with God,” said Ford.

And the community did come out to hear about their books, speak with the authors and get their books personally signed by them. Perkins shared a little about her book and why she felt moved to write it.

“I decided to write this book because it’s one of the things that I see and I hear that comes up as a life coach when I’m talking to women,” said Perkins. “There’s this underlying search for joy.”

She continued, “As a part of my research and dissertation, I wanted to just explore why does joy seem to be a distance from what we’re looking for—happiness, yes, we find it, but it’s fleeting, it comes and goes, but the consistency of happiness is joy.

“In the Bible, joy comes up 165 times—I kept reading it and saying, but why can’t we hold on to

vived a bout with COVID-19. It was through the journals he kept during those trials that birthed his book

of prayers. He shared that now, more than ever, positive and spiritual upliftment is needed.

“It’s a much-needed time because of the unrest that’s happening in L.A.,” said Ford about his book and Perkins’ book.

Ford continued, “I think that we have to call upon a spiritual power, a higher power to help unify us, to help deliver us through these challenging trials and tribulations that we’re going through.

“People need to feel free and the only way you can feel free is through God’s love.”

“Oh, my goodness, I’m so grateful to the Sentinel,” said Perkins. “I’m so grateful to Danny, Jr. and it was a wonderful experience to do it with Dave.”



BRIAN W. CARTER/L.A. SENTINEL

Perkins takes a picture with attendees at the book signing.

it? What I’ve discovered is joy is just a decision.

“It’s not something way out, far in the distance, it’s an internal decision that we make a commitment to ourselves that one, we deserve joy and that joy is what we decide even in the midst of pain, sorrow, disappointments and grief and all the things that life throws at us, there’s joy somewhere and that’s what this book is about.

“It’s my invitation to everyone to explore joy as a constant in your life.”

Ford is a two-time cancer survivor who helped his son through a difficult health journey and sur-



BRIAN W. CARTER/L.A. SENTINEL

“People need to feel free and the only way you can feel free is through God’s love.”—David Ford



BRIAN W. CARTER/L.A. SENTINEL

Danny Bakewell, Jr. introduces the authors at the book signing.

prayers that we pray quietly inside and those are the prayers that anchor the joy in our lives.”

up were supposed to be here because they inspired us as well.”

“This has been so mov-

Chuck Walton Is Building a Legacy of Love, Business, and Black Fatherhood

BY KHARI JONES, JR.
Contributing Writer

For Chuck Walton, success isn’t about fame or flashing lights — it’s about family. As the founder of Living Legends Group, a global sports, entertainment, production, and brand management company,

Khloé Kardashian. Walton isn’t just putting her in front of cameras — he’s showing her how to move with confidence, purpose, and power.

“She’s the face of a pajama brand and already has opportunities I never dreamed of at her age,” he says with pride.

“I told her mother the other day, I’m not rich yet — but I’m getting close. My daughter thinks I have Eddie Murphy money because we live big. Anytime I get a check, the first thing I ask is, ‘What does my daughter need?’ That’s what makes me happy — taking care of her.”



about spreading love. That’s where my compassion for the world came from — I was always with him on the job.”

It’s a spirit Walton carries into every business deal, every handshake, and every late-night brainstorm. His company, Living Legends Group, is already making waves by helping athletes transition into the entertainment industry, thanks in part to a powerful partnership with Les Garland, the co-founder of MTV and VH1.

“As I progressed through the sports and entertainment industry, I felt like the natural transition

That approach has made Living Legends Group not only a business force, but a trusted bridge for emerging creatives and seasoned professionals alike. He helps others monetize their craft, while pouring into his own family with the same dedication.

“Helping people, showing love, and moving with purpose — that’s the win for me,” Walton says. “I don’t need to impress anyone. My Instagram is my business card.”

Now, with Gia by his side, Walton is redefining what legacy looks like —

not as something you leave behind, but something you live out loud, every day.

“I want to continue the legacy my father created and give it to my daughter. It takes a village to raise a child. I’m just doing my part — and loving every minute of it.”

Simon Burris: Africana Diaspora Black History Month II Crossword

JUNETEENTH 2025

www.simonburris700.com

Across

1. *1965 MLK arrest site (Alabama)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

"All the News
That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times

THE WEATHER

Thunderstorms will be widespread from New Mexico to the Ohio Valley and Great Lakes region this afternoon. Warm and dry in the West. Weather map appears on Page D8.

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MONDAY, JUNE 30, 2025

Prices in Canada may be higher

\$4.00

Senate Tax Bill Could Lift Debt By \$3.3 Trillion

Price Tag May Alienate
G.O.P. Fiscal Hawks

By ANDREW DUEHREN

WASHINGTON — The sprawling tax and health care bill that Senate Republicans are trying to pass would add at least \$3.3 trillion to the already-bulging national debt over a decade, the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office said on Sunday, putting a far higher price tag on the measure than some of the party's fiscal hawks had indicated they could stomach.

The cost of the Senate bill, which Republicans rolled out overnight on Friday and were still shaping on Sunday, far exceeds the \$2.4 trillion cost of the version passed in the House, where lawmakers had insisted that the overall price of the bill not substantially change. But Senate Republicans still moved forward with a number of costly changes to the bill, including making prized tax breaks for business a permanent feature of the tax code.

With roughly \$29 trillion in debt currently held by the public, the budget office had already expected the government to borrow another \$21 trillion over the next decade, meaning the Republican bill would make an already-dire fiscal forecast worse. And the initial estimate of a cost of \$3.3 trillion for the Senate bill is an undercount, because it does not include additional borrowing costs that could push the bill's overall addition to the debt closer to \$4 trillion.

That is the central complaint of hard-right Republicans who have resisted the measure and insisted on a lower cost. On Saturday night, a group of them demanding bigger cuts — including Senators Ron Johnson of Wisconsin, Mike Lee of Utah, Cynthia Lummis of Wyoming and Rick Scott of Florida — held out for four hours before agreeing to begin debate on the bill.

The main component driving the cost of the Republican legislative effort is the extension of a series of tax cuts from 2017. Many of those tax cuts are set to expire this year, and extending them into the future represents a roughly \$3.8 trillion hit to the budget. Republicans have also piled some additional tax cuts on top, including versions of President Trump's promises to not tax tips and overtime, bringing the overall size of

Continued on Page A15

TILLIS WON'T RUN The North Carolina Republican's move came after the president threatened to support a challenger. PAGE A15

As Resources Dried Up, L.A. Found How to Be Less Thirsty

You've probably come across more stories about water woes in California than you can recall, so you may feel you've had enough for a while.

MICHAEL KIMMELMAN
CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK
I understand. There's no easy or permanent fix. The protagonists don't divide neatly into good and evil.

Water in the state often isn't where the people are — or, as with the recent fires, isn't there at all. After looking into the subject for years, I still can't wrap my head around the endless ins and outs.

But there is one indisputable fact that keeps surfacing in the conversations I have about Cali-

so, millions more people have moved to greater Los Angeles, settling in increasingly far-flung reaches of the desert and in the mountains, requiring more faucets, toilets and shower heads, producing more garbage and more gridlock on the 405 freeway, reinforcing all the clichés about excess and sprawl. And during this same time, Angelenos have been consuming less water.

I don't just mean per person, though that figure, according to state authorities, is down by a whopping 43 percent since 1990. I mean, residents and businesses in the Los Angeles area now consume less water in total. The population has grown, but the



The Los Angeles Aqueduct, a feat of engineering in the early 20th century, carries water hundreds of miles to millions in L.A.

the city's water authority. (The industry metric, an acre-foot is

Angelenos to cities across California. But it is most striking in the



VINCENT ALBAN/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Pride, and Resistance

Cheering the New York City Pride March on Sunday. Millions packed the streets of Manhattan to celebrate amid the most hostile political climate for L.G.B.T.Q. Americans in decades. Page A20.

On Border, Empty Farms and Terrified Workers

By EDGAR SANDOVAL

RIO GRANDE VALLEY, Texas — Alexandra, a 55-year-old undocumented immigrant, was on her way to work at a watermelon farm in the border city of Edinburg, Texas, recently when her oldest son stopped her before she stepped out of her aging trailer.

"Please don't go. You are going to get deported," he told Alexandra, who asked that her last name not be used because she did not want to attract attention from federal immigration agents. Her son then showed her graphic videos of federal agents chasing and handcuffing migrants seemingly all

Some Wary of Planting if Harvesting Help Won't Be There

over the Rio Grande Valley of Texas. "That could be you," he said.

President Trump's conflicting orders to exempt, then target, then again exempt farm workers from his aggressive immigration sweeps of work sites have caused havoc in agricultural industries across the country, where about 42 percent of farm workers are un-

documented, according to the Agriculture Department.

But perhaps nowhere is fear among farm workers more palpable than on the farms and ranches along the southwestern U.S.-Mexico border, where for centuries workers have considered the frontier as being more porous than prohibitive.

Administration officials have vowed to make good on a once-popular campaign promise from Mr. Trump to deport millions of undocumented workers, in what he has said will be the largest mass deportation in U.S. history.

As workplace raids have eroded

Continued on Page A14

Suspense Builds in Iran As Theocracy Staggers

Flicker of Hope for Freedoms After War

By ROGER COHEN

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — Roxana Saberi felt like she was back behind bars in Tehran. As she watched Israel's bombing of Evin prison, the notorious detention facility at the core of Iran's political repression, she shuddered at memories of solitary confinement, relentless interrogation, fabricated espionage charges and a sham trial during her 100-day incarceration in 2009.

Like many Iranians in the diaspora and at home, Ms. Saberi wavered, torn between her dreams of a government collapse that would free the country's immense potential and her concern for family and friends as the civilian death toll mounted. Longings for liberation and for a cease-fire vied with each other.

"For a moment, I imagined seeing Iran again in my lifetime," said Ms. Saberi, 48, a dual Iranian and American citizen and author who has taken a break from her journalistic career. "I also thought how ridiculous it was that the Islamic Republic wasted decades accusing thousands of women's rights advocates, dissidents and others of

being spies, when they couldn't catch the real spies."

Those spies, mainly from Israel's Mossad foreign intelligence service, penetrated Iran's highest political and military echelons. The question now is what a shaken Islamic Republic in dire economic straits will do with what President Masoud Pezeshkian, a moderate, has called "a golden opportunity for change." That moment is also one of extreme, even existential, risk brought on by the 12-day Israeli-Iranian war that the United States briefly joined.

The military campaign flirted with dislodging the clerical autocracy that has made uranium enrichment the symbol of Iran's national pride, but stopped short of killing Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's 86-year-old supreme leader, even though Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel had said that the ayatollah's death would "end the conflict." The 46-year-old Islamic Republic limps on.

It does so despite the collapse of its "axis of resistance" that was formed through the funding,

Continued on Page A10

Sheikh at Top of Soccer World Is Stealthily Arming Warlords

By DECLAN WALSH
and TARIQ PANJA

NAIROBI, Kenya — Weeks before Sudan flamed into a calamitous civil war, one of the richest men in the Middle East, Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed al-Nahyan, welcomed an architect of the chaos to his sumptuous Persian Gulf palace.

The sheikh, a younger brother to the powerful ruler of the United Arab Emirates, is recognized in the West as a collector of super-yachts and racehorses, and is perhaps best known as the owner of Manchester City, the hugely successful English soccer team. Last year, his team in New York won approval to build a \$780 million soccer stadium in Queens, the first in the city.

Yet there he was, in February 2023, openly entertaining a notorious commander from the deserts of western Sudan — someone who had seized power in a coup, built a fortune on illicit gold and was ac-



POOL PHOTO BY AHMAD AL-RUBAYE

Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed al-Nahyan of the U.A.E.

cused of widespread atrocities.

The two men knew each other well. Sheikh Mansour had hosted the Sudanese commander, Lt. Gen. Mohamed Hamdan, two years earlier at an arms fair in the Emirates, where they toured exhibits of rockets and drones.

And when Sudan's conflict exploded, in April 2023, Sheikh Man-

Continued on Page A6

The World's Best in Squash? Some Call Him a Bold Cheat.

By DAVID SEGAL

Not long ago, an anonymous YouTube known only as Quash Bad Squash reposted one of the strangest moments in the history of the sport.

It's match ball in the finals of last year's British Open tournament, with a check for \$26,600 on the line. The four-time world champion Ali Farag, an Egyptian with the physique of a pipe cleaner and the speed of Mercury, is about to lunge forward and hit a backhand. But as he tries to get past his opponent, a rising superstar and fellow countryman named Mostafa Asal, Mr. Farag does something baffling. He stops playing.



REUTERS

Mostafa Asal in 2023, when he was barred twice from play.

site SquashTV.

"What has he done?" shouts an-

Alhambra, Baldwin Hills, Bell, Bell Gardens, Bellflower, Boyle Heights, Carson, City of Commerce, City of Compton, Crenshaw, Cudahy, Culver City, Downey, East Los Angeles, El Sereno, Gardena, Hawthorne, Hollywood, Huntington Park, Inglewood, Lawndale,

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Lincoln Heights, Lynwood, Maywood, Montebello, Monterey Park, Mt. Washington, Norwalk, Paramount, Pico Rivera, Rosemead, San Gabriel, Santa Fe Springs, South Gate, South Los Angeles, The City of Commerce, Vernon, Watts, West Hollywood, Whittier

'Stand together in solidarity'

Immigration is a 'Black issue, too,' civic coalition says

By RAY RICHARDSON
Contributing Writer

SOUTH LOS ANGELES — More than 30 community organizations in the Los Angeles area pledged a unified front in opposition to the ongoing immigration raids in Southern California and made it clear that the crisis is also a "Black issue."

As agents from the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement continue to detain suspected undocumented Latino residents, leaders of the organizations expressed fears that ICE will start devoting more attention to Black immigrants.

"One out of every five Black persons in L.A. is an immigrant," Nana Gyamfi, executive director of Black Alliance for Just Immigration, said at a press conference June 24 near Leimert Park. "What we see happening



Protesters demonstrate near City Hall in downtown Los Angeles against federal agents conducting raids against immigrants. Leaders from several community organizations held a news conference June 24 to make it clear that immigration is also a 'Black issue.'

Photo by Lorenzo Gomez

with enforcement is just a tip of the sphere. We're in a police state. They're sending people to prisons all over the world. This is the time to stand together in solidarity."

Several leaders at the press conference confirmed recent sightings of vehicles containing ICE and Department of Homeland Security agents cruising through Black neighborhoods, including St. Andrews Park in South Los Angeles, the site of a recent Juneteenth celebration.

With no apparent signs of ICE slowing down their immigration raids, members of Black Women for Wellness summoned the community organizations to show support for targeted Hispanic and Latino residents and their families.

Black Women for Wellness also wanted to raise awareness in Los Angeles' Black immigrant community, which is beginning to feel more scrutiny from ICE and DHS patrols.

"This is not a press conference for feel-good; this is a press See IMMIGRATION, Page 11

STREET BEAT
What problem would you like to make disappear?



GINGER JOHNSON
OAKLAND

Racism, white supremacy and justice. It's so blatant now. It's no longer implicit, it's just outright. So many people have been affected."



TYLER KYSER
OAKLAND

"The patriarchy, specifically the president. I want him gone out of the White House. He is a threat to our democracy."



HEATHER SNEIDER
DAYTONA BEACH

"Fascism, because I live under it in Florida."



ELLEN BARRY
OAKLAND

"Any form of intolerance or hatred

BOUNCING ALONG



A youngster plays on bounce equipment under a parent's watchful eye at Roy Campanella Park June 22 during a county-sponsored Juneteenth celebration. Celebrations were held throughout South Los Angeles commemorating the end of slavery.

Courtesy photo

Leimert opens 'Markets at Metro' to spur development

WAVE STAFF REPORT

LEIMERT PARK — The ceremonial pouring of libations to honor ancestors marked the official launch of Markets at Metro at the Leimert Park K Line Station June 21. Part of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's economic development program, Markets at Metro is designed to support, sustain and grow small businesses and eligible nonprofit organizations located near transit corridors.

The libation ceremony was followed by African drumming and celebratory dancing, setting the tone for a new endeavor.

The launch at Leimert Park Village featured three local vendors: ORA Café, Sole Folks, and All Chill Hip Hop Ice Cream. Each business operated from kiosks or carts on the street-level plaza at the K Line Station, serving coffee, vegan artisan pizza and dairy-free ice cream to local residents, visitors, and rail line riders.

Tony Jolly, owner of ORA Café, showcased his line of locally curated and sourced See MARKETS, Page 11

\$3 million state grant to fund Black cultural district

By STEPHEN ODUNTAN
Contributing Writer

SOUTH LOS ANGELES — California is moving forward with plans to create a black cultural district in South Los Angeles, backed by \$3 million in state funding secured by state Sen. Lola Smallwood-Cuevas, D-Los Angeles.

The proposed district would honor neighborhoods such as the Crenshaw Corridor, which has a rich history of



longing and connection."

The funding will go toward public art installations, cultural markers and monuments that celebrate Black life and creativity in South Los Angeles. The proposal will be submitted to the California Arts Council, the state body responsible for granting official cultural district status.

Sen. Smallwood-Cuevas said the effort is about more than recognition — it's about resilience.

"Without formal efforts like

and ceremonial offerings. Smallwood-Cuevas is scheduled to make a special appearance.

Over the years, Leimert Park has become the cultural center for the Black community in Los Angeles. That distinction once belonged to Central Avenue, which was the cultural epicenter of the Black community from the 1920s through the 1940s.

Crenshaw Boulevard has become the main north-south thoroughfare for the Black

Trump declares Israel-Iran truce



BORDER PATROL agents conducted a raid at a Bell car wash last week, leading to chaotic confrontations.

Masked federal agents spread fear, put local police in a bind

Immigration raids lead to confusion and dangerous situations for residents, cops.

BY NATHAN SOLIS
AND RICHARD WINTON

Increasingly aggressive immigration raids carried out by masked federal agents, sometimes using unmarked vehicles, are creating problems for local law enforcement agencies. Police have little or no insight into where the federal enforcement actions are taking place but often have to deal with the aftermath, including protests and questions from residents about what exactly happened. In some cases, local cops have been mis-

taken for federal agents, eroding years of work police have done to build trust with immigrant communities. In Bell, chaos erupted when masked men arrived at a car wash and began detaining its workers, sparking a confrontation with residents and immigration rights advocates before they were forced to hastily drive over curbs and street islands to escape. In Pasadena last week, a man stepped out of his unmarked vehicle at an intersection, unholstered his pistol and aimed it at a group of pedestrians before returning to his car, turning on its red and blue emergency lights and speeding off. Video of the incident went viral. That incident left the police chief of Pasadena resigned to figure out whether it was a crime or part of a federal raid. "There's no way for us to verify," Po-

lice Chief Gene Harris said. The department reviewed surveillance footage and other video and saw the credentials on the man's uniform, according to the chief. "We were able to determine that to the best of our estimation he was an ICE agent. ... We will not look into it any deeper than that," he said. At Dodger Stadium last week, immigration agents staged outside the parking lot prompted protests and questions that local officials had to address. "They show up without uniforms. They show up completely masked. They refuse to give ID," Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass said during a news briefing after the Dodger Stadium incident. "Who are these people? And frankly, the vests that they have on look like they ordered them from Amazon." [See Masked, A8]

Patients skip healthcare for fear of ICE

BY CORINNE PURTILL

Missed childhood vaccinations. Skipped blood sugar checks. Medications abandoned at the pharmacy. These are among the healthcare disruptions providers have noticed since Immigration and Customs Enforcement operations began in Southern California this month. Across the region, once-busy parks, shops and businesses have emptied as undocumented residents and their families hole up at home in fear. As rumors of immigration arrests have swirled around clinics and hospitals, many patients are also opting to skip chronic-care management visits as well as routine childhood checkups. In response, local federally quali-

fied health centers — institutions that receive federal funds and are required by law to provide primary care regardless of ability to pay — have been scrambling to organize virtual appointments, house calls and pharmacy deliveries to patients who no longer feel safe going out in public. "We're just seeing a very frightening and chaotic environment that's making it extremely difficult to provide for the healthcare needs of our patients," said Jim Mangia, president of St. John's Community Health, which offers medical, dental and mental healthcare to more than 100,000 low-income patients annually in Southern California. Before the raids, the system's network of clinics logged about a 9% no-show rate, Mangia said. In recent

weeks, more than 30% of patients have canceled or failed to show. In response, the organization has launched a program called Healthcare Without Fear to provide virtual and home visits to patients concerned about the prospect of arrest. "When we call patients back who missed their appointment and didn't call in, overwhelmingly, they're telling us they're not coming out because of ICE," said Mangia, who estimates that 25% of the clinic's patient population is undocumented. "People are missing some pretty substantial healthcare appointments." A recent survey of patient no-shows at nonprofit health clinics across Los Angeles County found no universal trends across the 66 mem- [See Health, A8]

Announcement comes after U.S. base in Qatar is attacked

BY NABIH BULOS

BEIRUT — President Trump announced Monday that Israel and Iran had reached a ceasefire just hours after the Islamic Republic fired missiles at the largest U.S. military installation in the Middle East. Iran had called the attack a "mighty" retaliation for the American bombardment of its nuclear sites. Posting on his social media platform around 6 p.m. Eastern, Trump wrote, "Officially, Iran will start the CEASEFIRE and, upon the 12th Hour, Israel will start the CEASEFIRE and, upon the 24th Hour, an Official END to THE 12 DAY WAR will be saluted by the World. During each CEASEFIRE, the other side will remain PEACEFUL and RESPECTFUL."

After congratulating the governments of both countries, Trump said, "This is a War that could have gone on for years, and destroyed the entire Middle East, but it didn't, and never will! God bless Israel, God bless Iran, God bless the Middle East, God bless the United States of America, and GOD BLESS THE WORLD!" Trump added that the conflict should be called "THE 12 DAY WAR." Hours earlier in the Middle East, sirens sounded in U.S. military facilities in Qatar, Iraq, Bahrain, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia as Iran launched a volley of missiles at Al Udeid Air Base, which Trump visited five weeks ago. The Iranian military declared — in a televised announcement on state TV complete with martial music [See Mideast, A5]



MISSILES and interceptors are seen in Doha, Qatar, after Iran launched attacks Monday on a U.S. base.

NATO allies seek to restrain Trump

European leaders plan to discourage any pursuit of an ouster of Iran's government.

BY MICHAEL WILNER

THE HAGUE — Whether the United States launches a broader war against Iran after bombing its nuclear facilities may come down to President Trump's meetings at NATO's Netherlands summit this week, a long scheduled gathering that now carries far higher stakes. Trump said late Monday

on his social media platform that Israel and Iran had agreed to a ceasefire that would quickly lead to a conclusion of the war. "On the assumption that everything works as it should, which it will, I would like to congratulate both Countries, Israel and Iran, on having the Stamina, Courage, and Intelligence to end, what should be called, 'THE 12 DAY WAR,'" he wrote. There was no immediate response from Iran or Israel. Washington's transatlantic partners have praised the U.S. operation, which supplemented an ongoing Israeli campaign targeting Iran's [See NATO, A5]

Cash-strapped L.A.'s legal payouts soaring

BY NOAH GOLDBERG
AND PHI DO

The amount of money that the city of Los Angeles pays annually for police misconduct, trips and falls, and other lawsuits has ballooned, rising from \$24 mil-

fice and an increase in the sheer number of lawsuits against the city. The biggest chunk of payouts over the last five years was for "dangerous conditions" — lawsuits singling out faulty city infrastructure, such as broken elevators, potholes, and

How to fireproof homes? A dramatic test

At a demonstration

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CRIS GUTIERREZ, above, the Santa Monica Community Gardens Advisory Committee's chair, and her husband use the Main Street site. "We have a problem [with] creating another place of inequality," she said.

Photographs by CATHERINE DZILENSKI For The Times

Community garden or a wealthy 'playground'?

Santa Monica officials may raise plot fees 200% amid budget shortfall

By MALIA MENDEZ

At Santa Monica's Main Street Community Garden, each plot bears the mark of its tenant. In the southwest corner, an aesthete's low wooden fence matches the stain of twin soil beds enclosed within it. A few spots down, a conservationist's compost pile houses rotten fruit and plant clippings.

Nestled among them, Mariel Rodriguez's 175-

square-foot plot is strewn with experiments: sheets of foil to deter garden rats, raised beds to minimize shadows and plant clothes to partition herbs.

At her family's 400-square-foot apartment down the block, the only outdoor space Rodriguez has is a shared brick patio. But here, with dirt under her fingernails and the scent of mint in the air, she's in tune with the natural world.

"This is all I have," she

said, gesturing to the crops below. "This is my 'outside.'"

Soon, though, Rodriguez's outdoor ritual could be too expensive to keep up.

Santa Monica officials this month are set to approve a 200% fee hike for garden plots across four of the city's six community gardens, which would generate \$30,000 in revenue and increase the public works program's cost recovery to 60% from 20%. The proposal is pending, with the City Coun-

cil expected to finalize and adopt the 2025-27 operating budget Tuesday.

It's one of myriad measures city officials have put forth to compensate for a \$60-million budget shortfall, resulting from a combination of pandemic- and wildfire-induced economic fallout and a tally of child sexual abuse settlements costing the city about \$230 million.

Tati Simonian, spokesperson for the city, said [See Gardens, B4]

Agents take father of 3 Marines by force in O.C.

Video goes viral. Son says Border Patrol injured landscaper Narciso Barranco.

By KAITLYN HUAMANI

Video of a landscaper being taken down, pinned and repeatedly punched by masked federal agents in Orange County has gone viral online, and Alejandro Barranco finds it painful to watch.

The Marine veteran says his father, Narciso Barranco, was working outside a Santa Ana IHOP on Saturday when several masked men approached him. Frightened, he began to run away, his son said. Moments later, he was on the ground, held down by the men, who struck him.

The younger Barranco told The Times on Sunday that his father was pepper-sprayed and beaten, and his shoulder was dislocated. After speaking with him Sunday about 6 p.m., Barranco said his father had not received medical treatment, food or water after more than 24 hours in a detention facility in Los Angeles.

"I don't think it was just," Barranco said of the use of force against his dad. "I don't think they need four 200-[pound]-plus guys to hold down a 5-6 or 5-7, 150-pound guy."

In a statement to The Times on Monday, Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs

Tricia McLaughlin of the Department of Homeland Security confirmed Border Patrol agents arrested Barranco, who she said was an "illegal alien," on Saturday. She alleges Barranco swung a weed whacker directly at an agent's face and refused to comply with the agents' commands or requests to identify himself.

"The agents took appropriate action and followed their training to use the minimum amount of force necessary to resolve the situation."

[See Detained, B5]

ICE flights departing L.A. area more than double

The planes were often headed to detention centers in Arizona and Texas, data show.

By VANESSA MARTÍNEZ AND SANDHYA KAMBHAMPATI

Flights out of Los Angeles-area airports related to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement deportations more than doubled in the month before June 15.

ICE increased its activity in the region this month, conducting multiple raids, including one on June 6 in the Fashion District. As a result of the raids, 330 people have been arrested as of June 11, according to the White House, some of whom were flown out of the area. ICE hasn't released many details regarding detainees.

An ICE spokesperson told The Times that the agency does not provide details about future flights for security reasons. "ICE field offices coordinate with ICE Air Operations, headquartered in Mesa, Ariz., to arrange removal travel and domestic transfers, which are conducted using both commercial airlines and ICE Air charter aircraft," the spokesperson said in an email.

The Times reviewed and analyzed public flight data compiled by Tom Cartwright, a volunteer immigration advocate at Witness at the Border who tracks ICE flights. Cartwright has tracked about 36,000 ICE flights over five years by using publicly available plane

Voices ANITA CHABRIA COLUMNIST

Lawmakers' oversight more vital than ever

Immigrant detention centers are trying to keep them out. But answers are needed.

Rep. Judy Chu first went inside the immigrant detention center in Adelanto, Calif., in 2014, and conditions were bad.

When she made it back inside the privately run facility in the Mojave Desert last week, things weren't



REP. JUDY CHU of Monterey Park was denied access last week to the Metropolitan Detention Center.

much better.

"It is just scandalous as to how it has not improved," she told me.

Truth be told, conditions are likely to get worse, if only because of sheer numbers and chaos. Which makes it all the more important to have elected leaders like Chu (D-Monterey Park) willing to put themselves on the front lines to give a voice to the truly, really voiceless.

As tens of thousands of immigrants are chased down and incarcerated across the United States, oversight of their detention has become increasingly

difficult and important.

Shortly after the unannounced visit to Adelanto by Chu and four other members of Congress a few days ago, Immigration and Customs Enforcement announced new rules attempting to further limit access by lawmakers to its facilities — despite clear federal law allowing them unannounced entrance to such lockups. While Chu and others have called these new curbs on access illegal, they are still likely to be enforced until and unless courts rule otherwise.

[See Chabria, B4]

Two heavy, valuable sculptures are recovered